

HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL
MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL HOSPITAL

*The Robert W. Lotess Memorial Group
for the Study of Diseases Causing Deformities*

THE ARTHRITIS UNIT

Please Reply to:
MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL HOSPITAL
Boston, Mass. 02114

October 7, 1985

Attallah Kappas, M.D.
Fairchild Professor and
Vice President
The Rockefeller University Hospital
1230 York Avenue
New York, NY 10021-6399

CONFIDENTIAL

LETTER OF REFERENCE

Dear Dr. Kappas:

I am responding to your letter concerning the possible recruitment of Ronald Crystal to direct a new clinical research group at the Rockefeller University Hospital. I think he would be an excellent choice.

I have known Ronald Crystal since 1968 when he came to the Massachusetts General Hospital as an intern in Medicine. He was an extremely capable and certainly aggressive house officer and it could have been predicted that he would go on to do good things. I began to see much more of him after I returned by my sabbatical at Oxford in 1974. He had moved from the hematology to the pulmonary branch at the NIH and had begun to work on lung collagen. He made good use of the techniques available at that time to analyze pulmonary tissue and define for the first time some of the abnormalities in the distribution of matrix components. Because of his interest in pulmonary fibrosis he became deeply involved in attempting to define the mechanisms that control collagen biosynthesis and produced some interesting and innovative studies. He showed that there was intracellular degradation of a portion of newly synthesized collagen and how this degradation was controlled by environmental factors such as catecholamines. He took a broad approach to investigating control of collagen deposition and made observations on collagenases and control of cell movement by collagens. He was in an excellent position to become involved early on in collagen molecular biology and several pioneering observations in this field came from his laboratory. His contributions to the field of matrix chemistry and biology were important enough and widely enough recognized that he was selected as co-chairman of the Gordon Conference on Structural Macromolecules in 1983.

His interests soon extended well beyond collagen and although he continued to maintain an interest in the problems related to pulmonary fibrosis he approached these from another point of view, that of cellular interactions. He showed the importance of mitogenic factors from monocytes that contributed to

fibroblast proliferation and the relationships between T lymphocytes and monocytes in several different forms of interstitial lung disease. He and members of his laboratory devised techniques of alveolar lavage which enabled them to harvest sufficient numbers of cells from patients with different diseases to begin to make some cellular sense. He also extended his interests to studies of elastin biosynthesis and its control and the mechanisms of elastin degradation and the roles of inhibitors of elastase. He has written many scholarly reviews which confirm that he is a person of wide interests and considerable depth.

It is obvious that he has achieved what he has by hard work and a driving style. He has managed to assemble a group of talented young people to work with him many of whom have gone on to establish laboratories of their own. He has had the advantage of being able to select from a large pool of achievers but nevertheless made excellent choices. He has also been able to establish excellent collaborations with other individuals at the NIH and elsewhere. He is very ambitious and possibly has already published too much. Many of these publications were the result of the effort of a number of different people all of whom were similarly ambitious. Most of his papers have been published in what we would consider first-rate journals. They are usually well written and the reasons for the conclusions well documented. He has enough vision and energy to assemble a productive group at the Rockefeller University. I think he would fit in very well at your institution and thrive there. He is quite tough but he laughs a lot, occasionally even at himself. I think he would be an excellent person to recruit for the position of director of a new clinical research unit. In my opinion he is certainly in the top rank of clinical investigators anywhere.

Try to get him.

With best wishes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Stephen M. Krane".

Stephen M. Krane, M.D.

SMK/ma